



*How to ask for
what you need*

Best Corporate Branding Agency UK - *Business Excellence Awards 2020*

BRANDABLE & Co.

We're on a mission to make business more human
because being human is good for business

© Brandable & Co. / www.brandableandco.com

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO **ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED**

Hi! I'm Sallee, founder of Brandable & Co. and I hope you're not only enjoying, but finding value, in the series of free guides that we are pulling together. I decided to write this one, because lately I've noticed a reluctance in people to 'ask', and I've always lived by the thinking that if you don't ask, you don't know and you don't get. So I'm going to share something that has always worked well for me. That way, rather than you wasting time figuring it out, you can spend that time asking for what you need.

How many of you 'need' something but don't want to ask? I'm sure it's more than a few of you...

Over the years I've learned that there is always someone in your network who holds the solution but whether or not you get access to it depends on HOW you ask! For example: "I need help" or "Can you help me?" aren't great ways to go about this. It is not clear, it can't be done quickly and if you're on the receiving end, responding to a request like this could be setting you up to fail or disappoint the person asking the question.

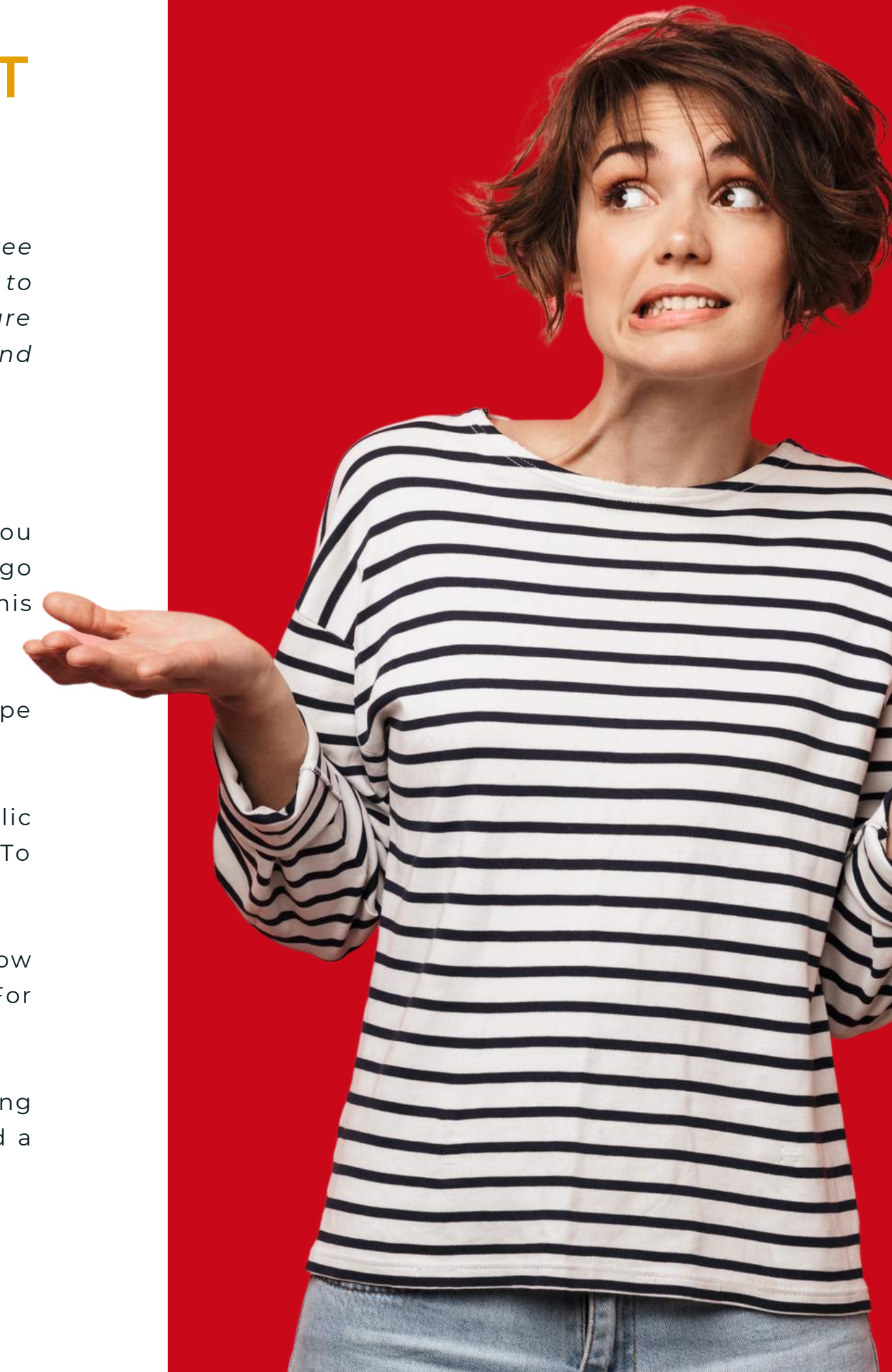
First, figure out exactly what it is you need. Be specific. If you need advice about something, what outcome do you hope to achieve once you've received that advice?

To put it into context, let's use "I would like to do more public speaking" as an example. Why do you want to do public speaking? If the answer is "to get my message out there", delve deeper. Why do you want to get your message out? To strengthen your career? To grow your business? Be precise, and more importantly, be honest with yourself about it.

Let's say you now know that the reason you'd like to get into public speaking is to reach a bigger audience and grow your business. Now you need to figure out where the people in your audience are that can help you to achieve this. For this example, we'll assume that they're on Instagram and LinkedIn (seeing as we'll be sharing this guide there!)

In this case, Instagram & LinkedIn are essentially playing the role of your "shop window" (or store front if you're reading this from across the pond). If you want to know more about my 'Shop You' approach to building a brand, I've shared a free guide called 'Personal Brand Overview' on the resources page. Right, what next?

© Brandable & Co. / www.brandableandco.com





HOW TO ASK & RECEIVE WHAT YOU NEED IN 6 SIMPLE, STRATEGIC STEPS

1. A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

If you don't already have images that show you as a speaker, you'll need some. (*If you do, skip to step 2*). Take some photos of you speaking - this can be as simple as against plain background in your home, with someone snapping pics of you talking - you're not going to say you actually spoke at an event if you didn't (think Positioning, not manipulation!) but if there is nothing in the window to suggest that you're a speaker, it'll be difficult for people to see you as one.

2. WINDOW DRESSING: DRESS YOUR WINDOW AND SHOW PEOPLE WHAT'S ON OFFER

Share a selection of 'speaking' images (& previous speaking event images) in your feed over the space of a few weeks, preferably accompanied by written content along the lines of: 5 tips on how to kick start your public speaking career / How to have an impact on stage etc. Remember: People will only know what you show them and if they can't visualise you as a speaker, it'll be harder to connect the dots.

3. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Figure out who you're going to ask. There is no point asking people who don't have aligned experience or connections. Who do you know that has the right network to solve your problem?

“If you dont ask, the answer is
always no.”

#askforwhatyouneed

GET READY TO **ASK GREAT QUESTIONS**

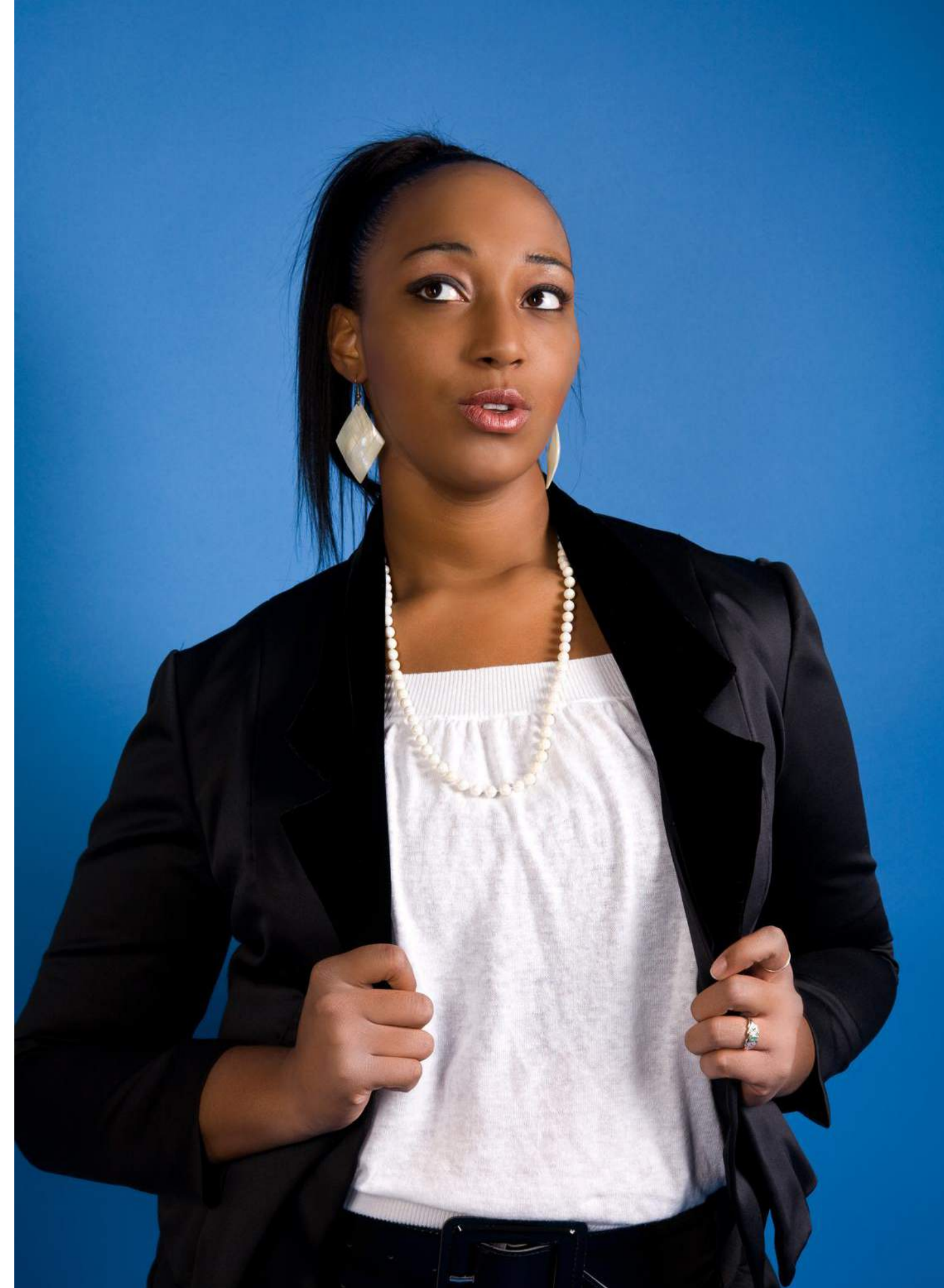
4. QUALITY QUESTIONS GET QUALITY ANSWERS

One of my go-to questions for many, many years has been "Who do you know that I could speak to about xyz?". In this instance, the person in your network that you plan to reach out to can be called Jill, and question might be:

"You're a fantastic speaker with a powerful message and it's something I'd love the opportunity to do more of as I grow my business. I am just starting out and have only spoken at two events so far, but the feedback was really positive and I'm excited about doing more. Do you know anyone that I can speak to who can give me some advice on how to find more speaking opportunities?"

Let's take a closer look at what happened here:

- a) *You're a fantastic speaker with a powerful message:* You have shared some kind words and paid Jill a compliment. This should be genuine and personalised for each person you reach out to.
- b) *Growing my business:* You've explained why.
- c) *I am just starting out and I've only spoken at two events so far:* You have been honest about where you are on your speaking journey.
- d) *The feedback was really positive:* You've given them a sprinkling of social proof (there is a free 'Social Proof' guide on the resources page if you want to know more about how this can strengthen your brand).
- e) *I'm excited about doing more:* You have shown enthusiasm (and selling is nothing more than a transfer of enthusiasm!)





GO WITH THE FLOW, BUT DON'T NEGLECT THE FOLLOW UP

f) *Advice on how to find more speaking opportunities:* You've asked for what you need.

g) *Do you know anyone that I can speak to who:* You've given Jill a way to support you without putting pressure on her to give up her time.

And you've framed it all in a great question! It's not in the example, and it could be stating the obvious, but keep it short (*people are busy trying to manage and solve their own problems!*) and end your message with a thank you.

5. IT MAY NOT ALWAYS GO THE WAY YOU INTENDED, BUT YOU'LL OFTEN END UP WHERE YOU NEED TO BE

Jill may respond saying that she's happy to speak to you but it's more likely that she will recommend someone else - we'll call him Tom. If Jill doesn't provide you with Tom's contact details, ask her what the best way to get in touch with him is.

6. SOLUTIONS ARE FOUND IN THE FOLLOW UP

If you don't get introduced directly, the next thing on your list is to follow up promptly! If you have Tom's email address, drop him a brief email that opens with something along the lines of:

I was recently talking about public speaking with our shared connection, Jill. She was singing your praises and it's clear that she thinks very highly of you as she recommended that I reach to you for some advice. I'm growing my business and although its early days in my speaker journey, I've now spoken at 2 events and the feedback was really positive. Jill suggested that we have a quick conversation to get your insight on how I might go about finding more speaking opportunities.

SO, WHAT DO YOU NEED?

It may also be a good idea to give Tom a get-out clause, along the lines of:

I'd value, and greatly appreciate your input, but if you don't have the time or you're not the right person, can you recommend someone else I can speak to instead?

Tom is not obligated to solve your problem, but he is obligated to reply, given that Jill is one of his contacts. If he isn't prepared to give you his time, you will at least get the name of someone else who may be happy to. And so it goes on – repeat step 6 as many times as you have to!



Seeing it written out like this may feel like a laborious way to go about things, but it isn't! It's effective and it works. Taking this approach will not only provide the solution to what you need, it will also generate quality recommendations, and build new relationships. Plus, if you stick in someone's mind in a positive way, they may come back to you in the future with an unexpected opportunity.

That's it, a simple yet effective way to ask for what you need. So what do you need?! Figure that out then follow the steps above and try asking for it in a more strategic way.



"You don't get results by focusing on results. You get results by focusing on the actions that produce results"

THERE'S MORE WHERE THIS CAME FROM!

CHECK OUT OUR SERIES OF FREE BRANDABLE & CO GUIDES



IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING WORTH SHARING & WOULD LIKE TO AUTHOR ONE OF OUR GUIDES, PLEASE SEE THE CONTRIBUTOR GUIDELINES IN THE RESOURCES SECTION OF OUR WEBSITE OR GET IN TOUCH WITH THE TEAM@BRANDABLEANDCO.COM



CONTACT BRANDABLE & CO

theteam@brandableandco.com
www.brandableandco.com
@brandableandco

SALLEE POINSETTE-NASH MANAGING DIRECTOR & FOUNDER

www.salleepoinsettenash.com
sallee@brandableandco.com
@salleespeaks